

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application. Claims 24, 26-30, 32, and 33 are pending. No claims have been amended, cancelled, or added. Therefore, claims 24, 26-30, 32, and 33 are now presented for examination.

Current Office Action Identical to Previous Office Action

The current Office Action mailed January 13, 2004 is identical to the previous Office Action mailed on October 2, 2003. A response to the previous action was mailed on December 31, 2003. A copy of the previous response is filed herewith.

With regard to the Office Action:

Claims -- It is submitted that the Applicant has responded to the current objections in the previous office action. The claims now pending are claims 24, 26-30, 32, and 33. As indicated in the previous action, claim 25 was incorporated into claim 24 and claim 31 was incorporated into claim 30. Applicant submits that the claims are in condition for allowance.

Amendment to the Title -- The Office Action objects to the title of the application. Amendment to the title was not included in the previous response. An amended title is provided herein. A conforming amendment is made to the heading on the first page of the application.

Information Disclosure Statement -- An information disclosure statement was filed on January 16, 2004, after the mailing date of the current office action. A copy of the document is enclosed herewith for your convenience. Applicant hereby requests consideration of the document.

Abstract -- An amendment to the abstract has been made to conform with the amendments made to the claims.

Title

The Examiner objects to the title as not being descriptive, and requires a title this is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Without any concession regarding the objection, the title has been deleted and replaced by a new title.

Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Ando et al.

The Examiner rejected claims 16, 17 and 19-23 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S Patent 4,839,729 of Ando et al. ("Ando").

Without any concession regarding the rejection, claims 16, 17, and 19-23 were cancelled without prejudice in the previous response. It is submitted that the rejection no longer applies to the claims presented in the application.

Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Veto et al.

The Examiner rejected claims 24 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by USSR publication no. SU 740085 of Veto et al. ("Veto").

Without any concession regarding the rejection, claims 24 and 30 were amended in the previous response by the incorporation of the allowable subject matter of claims 25 and 31 respectively. It is submitted that the rejection no longer applies to the claims presented in the application.

Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Ando et al.

The Examiner rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ando et al.

Without any concession regarding the rejection, claim 18 was cancelled without prejudice in the previous response. It is submitted that the rejection no longer applies to the claims presented in the application.

Objected Claims

Claims 25-29 and 31-33 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Such claims were put in condition for allowance in the previous response.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections have been overcome by the Amendment and Remark, and that the claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the objections and rejections be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

Invitation for a Telephone Interview

The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Request for an Extension of Time

Applicants respectfully petition for an extension of time to respond to the outstanding Office Action pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 (a) should one be necessary.

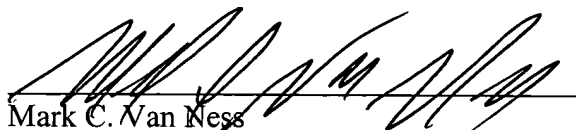
Charge our Deposit Account

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: 4/13/04


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